

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T JIDDA 8736

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, YS, SA
SUBJECT: SOUTH YEMEN

1. IN A MEETING DECEMBER 3 WITH MINDEF PRINCE SULTAN IN HIS CAPACITY AS ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER, AMBASSADOR AND ARP OFFICER BARBARA BODINE HAD A WIDE-RANGING DISCUSSION CONCERNING SAUDI PERCEPTIONS OF NORTH YEMEN AND PDRY. EMBASSY COUNSELOR ISA SABBAGH AND POL/MIL OFFICER LEWIS WERE ALSO AT THE MEETING.

2. DURING THE DISCUSSION MS. BODINE ASKED SULTAN FOR HIS VIEWS ON SOUTH YEMEN. PRINCE SULTAN INTERRUPTED HER QUESTION AND SAID IN AN ALARMED WAY, "I HOPE YOU ARE NOT GOING THERE." SHE ANSWERED EMPHATICALLY NO.

3. PRINCE SULTAN WENT ON TO SAY THAT IT WAS REGRETTABLE AND PAINFUL TO DISCUSS ONE'S BROTHERS IN A WAY THAT MIGHT HARM THEM. HE SAID THE SAG HAD EMBARKED ON A PROGRAM FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS TO GIVE THEM SUPPORT PARTICULARLY IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD. SUPPLY OF OIL FOR THEIR REFINERY WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF THE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, HE SAID.

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4. PRINCE SULTAN SAID THAT THE SAG EMBARKED ON THIS PROGRAM BECAUSE SOUTH YEMEN HAD CONTINUOUSLY SAID THAT THE ONLY REASON THEY TURNED TO THE COMMUNIST BLOC FOR ASSISTANCE WAS THAT NONE WAS FORTHCOMING FROM THEIR BROTHERS AND FROM THE WEST. SO IN AN EFFORT TO WEAN PDRY AWAY FROM THE SOVIET BLOC, SAUDI ARABIA BEGAN A MODEST

ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT PDRY WOULD MEET CERTAIN POLITICAL CONDITIONS. SAUDI ARABIA ALSO ASKED OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES TO ASSIST PDRY. PRINCE SULTAN SAID THAT THE SAG EVEN ENCOURAGED THE U.S. TO REESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE PDRY.

5. PRINCE SULTAN SAID POLITICAL CONDITIONS FOR THESE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS WERE: (1) TERMINATION OF SUPPORT FOR THE DHOFAR REBELS, (2) LESSENING OF THE COMMUNIST BLOC PRESENCE, AND (3) TERMINATION OF SUPPORT FOR RADICAL FORCES IN THE GULF AND HORN. THE SAUDI POLICY SPRANG FROM THE SAUDI PERCEPTION THAT OF ALL THE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES, SAUDI ARABIA WAS THE MOST VULNERABLE TO A RADICAL PDRY.

6. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SOME LIP SERVICE TO THE ABOVE THREE CONDITIONS, SULTAN SAID THAT PDRY'S DEEDS TO THE CONTRARY WERE MORE ELOQUENT. AS A RESULT SAUDI ARABIA HAS FROZEN ALL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS TO PDRY AND HAS ASKED OTHER ARABS TO DO THE SAME. HE SAID THAT THE SAG HAD FORMALLY PROTESTED TO THE SOUTH YEMENIS FOR NOT ADHERING TO THE CONDITIONS OF ASSISTANCE AND HAD TOLD THEM THAT IF THEY CONTINUED IN THESE HOSTILE ACTIONS SAG WOULD "HAVE TO TAKE OTHER MEASURES".
WEST

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